

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 SAJ-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 /066 W

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R 010605Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1677

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 1677

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD; KUWAIT ALSO PASS DOHA.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TC, IR

SUBJECT: SHAIKH ZAYID RECEIVES AMBASSADOR HELMS

1. IN SPITE OF BAD HEADCOLD, AS WELL AS PRESSURE OF PREPARATIONS FOR NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATIONS DECEMBER 2, SHAIKH ZAYID RECEIVED AMBASSADOR HELMS AND MYSELF FOR VERY CORDIAL TWO HOUR CONVERSATION EVENING OF NOVEMBER 29. SHAIKH ZAYID'S SON SULTAN, FOREIGN MINISTER SUWAIDI, AND MEMBER OF PRESIDENTIAL DIWAN ALI SHURAKA WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. AFTER SHAIKH ZAYID WELCOMED HIM WARMLY, AMBASSADOR HELMS COMPLIMENTED SHAIKY ON THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF HIS NATION, AND SAID THAT, PARTICULARLY CONSIDERING THE PROBLEMS THAT HAD TO BE OVERCOME, HE WAS MOST IMPRESSED WITH THE PROGRESS THAT HAD BEEN MADE. IN RESPONSE TO A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE FEDERATION, SHAIKH ZAYID EXPOUNDED AT LENGTH. MOST INTERESTING OF THESE COMMENTS WAS IN ANSWER TO QUESTION WHETHER ANY KIND OF AMAL-
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GAMATION OF MANY EMIRATE MILITARY FORCES WAS FORESEEN IN NEAR FUTURE. SHAIKH ZAYID SAID IT WAS IN FACT FOOLISHNESS ON PART OF

OTHER RULERS TO WANT TO MAINTAIN THESE FORCES IN ABSENCE OF ANY OUTSIDE THREAT. MONEY THEY SPENT ON THESE FORCES COULD BE MUCH BETTER INVESTED IN THINGS THEIR PEOPLE REALLY NEEDED. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVED THAT WITH TIME RULERS' ATTITUDES WOULD CHANGE AND THEY WOULD SEE ADVANTAGES OF STRONG FEDERAL FORCE. THRUST OF SHAIKH ZAYID'S LENGTHY REPLY WAS THAT HE FELT THAT TIME WAS WORKING FOR STRENGTHENED FEDERATION AND HE DID NOT WISH TO ACHIEVE THIS BY MEANS OF CONFRONTATION WITH THE OTHER RULERS.

3. SHAIKH ZAYID ASKED AMBASSADOR HELMS HIS IMPRESSIONS OF SHAH'S CURRENT POLICY. AMBASSADOR REPLIED THERE WERE TWO MAIN ASPECTS TO THAT HE COULD MENTION. ONE WAS SHAH'S DETERMINATION, WITH ENORMOUSLY INCREASED REVENUES FROM OIL THAT HAVE ACCRUED THIS YEAR, TO INDUSTRIALIZE NATION SO THAT THERE WAS VIABLE BASE FOR FUTURE WHEN OIL RAN OUT. SECOND WAS CONCERTED EFFORT SHAH WAS MAKING TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH ALL OF ITS NEIGHBORS, SOLE EXCEPTION BEING IRAQ. SHAIKH ZAYID SAID WITH RESPECT TO IRAQ THAT THIS WAS UNFORTUNATELY A DISPUTE THAT BENEFITED NEITHER SIDE. IN HIS MANY CONTACTS WITH IRAQIS SHAIKH ZAYID HAD SOUGHT TO TALK SOME GOOD SENSE TO THEM, BUT HE ADMITTED NEITHER HE NOR APPARENTLY ANYONE ELSE HAD HAD MUCH SUCCESS.

4. SHAIKH ZAYID THEN GOT INTO SUBJECT OF UAE-IRANIAN RELATIONS. HE TREATED EPISODE OF COMMUNIQUE LAST SUMMER AS BEING BENEATH THE CONCERN OF SERIOUS STATESMEN. "GOD, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO US WHEN SOMETHING REALLY SERIOUS COMES UP BETWEEN US AND IRAN IF THE SHAH BEHAVES IN THIS WAY OVER SOMETHING SO SMALL?" HE SAID HE PERSONALLY DID NOT CARE MUCH WHAT THE GULF WAS CALLED. WHY CAN'T THE IRANIANS CONTINUE CALLING IT THE PERSIAN GULF AND THE ARAB SIDE THE ARAB GULF? HOW ABOUT "THE ISLAMIC GULF?", HE ASKED JOCKULARLY. SHAH COULD CONTINUE TO CALL THE GULF WHAT HE WANTED BUT IT WAS NOT REASONABLE OF HIM TO EXPECT THE ARAB STATES, WHO HAD JUST AS MUCH COASTLINE AS IRAN DID, TO CALL IT THE PERSIAN GULF. HE HOPED THE SHAH COULD BE PERSUADED TO KEEP HIS SENSE OF PROPORTION ABOUT THIS.

5. AMBASSADOR HELMS SAID HE COULD NOT EXACTLY EXPLAIN THE REASON FOR SHAH'S EXCESSIVE SENSITIVITY ON THIS SUBJECT BUT HE COULD ASSURE SHAIKH ZAYID THAT IT WAS VERY REAL NONETHELESS. WHENEVER
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SUBJECT AROSE, THE SHAH ASKED THE RHETORICAL QUESTION WHY, WHEN THROUGHOUT ALL PERIODS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN HISTORY THIS BODY OF WATER WAS TERMED "THE PERSIAN GULF" THERE SHOULD NOW BE PEOPLE WHO WANTED TO CHANGE ITS NAME. AMBASSADOR HELMS SAID HE COULD ATTEST TO SHAH'S SENSITIVITY ON SUBJECT SINCE USG HAD ON OCCASION ITSELF RUN INTO IT.

6. THROUGHOUT CONVERSATION SHAIKH ZAYID STRESSED THAT AS SMALL COUNTRY ONLY SENSIBLE POLICY FOR UAE WAS TO GET ALONG WITH ITS NEIGHBORS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHICH WERE POWERFUL. HE SAID

REPEATEDLY THAT HE WANTED VERY GOOD RELATIONS WITH IRAN.

7. COMMENT: SHAIKH ZAYID'S RECEPTION OF AMBASSADOR HELMS AT THIS BUSY PERIOD WAS UNDOUBTEDLY STIMULATED PARTLY BY CURIOSITY TO MEET THE MAN WHO HAD FORMERLY BEEN HEAD OF US INTELLIGENCE. HOWEVER, KNOWING THE CLOSENESS OF US-IRANIAN RELATIONS, WE BELIEVE SHAIKH ZAYID ALSO DID NOT WANT TO MISS OPPORTUNITY TO LEAVE GOOD IMPRESSION ON MAN WHO WAS IN POSITION TO PUT IN A WORD FOR HIM WITH THE SHAH. (EVEN THOUGH THIS WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY ASKED OF HIM). AS FAR AS THIS EMBASSY IS CONCERNED, I WOULD BE ENTIRELY IN FAVOR IF AMBASSADOR HELMS FINDS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THIS. (SOME OF THE RECENT STRAIN IN UAE-IRANIAN RELATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN RELIEVED IN ANY CASE SINCE WE WERE INFORMED TODAY THAT AMBASSADOR BEHNAMEH OF IRAN HAS RETURNED TO ABU DHABI AFTER NEARLY FOUR MONTHS OF ABSENCE.)
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